



(U//FOUO) What's the CINR and What Does It Mean for Our Customers and NSA Analysts? (Part 1)

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Run Date: 03/09/2004

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(U//FOUO) Over the last year, through feedback from analysts and customers, we learned that the current processes for gathering and responding to customer requests for SIGINT products and services are not meeting their needs. They can be difficult to use and are inadequate to handle the workload and workflow. These findings were confirmed by outside consultants. Some initial approaches to remedy the situation were undertaken but did not really address the fundamental issue - NSA does not have an integrated process to gather, track and respond to customer requests.

(U//FOUO) This showed itself in many ways. For example, customer requests for information coming through NSA's front door are often divorced from the production cycle. Further, there is no common language within NSA or externally to refer to customers, countries, subjects, etc. As cottage industry solutions became as numerous as the symptoms, we recognized the need for an overall solution.

(U//FOUO) In late summer 2003, the Chief of the Customer Relationships Directorate established the **Customer Information Needs Response Integrated Process Team** (CINR IPT). The CINR was charged with developing and implementing a streamlined and seamless process whereby the customer can submit requests for SIGINT products and services and SID can effectively and efficiently respond. The CINR IPT comprises representatives from Customer Relationships, Analysis and Production, Data Acquisition, SIRVES and IAD. The team's [Concept of Operation](#) describes the goals, objectives, and the "to-be" state. See also the [CINR Storyboard](#).

(U//FOUO) The overall objectives are to enable our external customers to enter their requests in a logical, categorized fashion and allow tracking of the request throughout the process - from submission, through processing, to delivery and feedback. We also want to ensure that our internal workforce can easily view relevant requests, respond quickly, collaborate easily, and accurately assess our response to the customer. We envision a process similar to that used by any number of commercial organizations whereby a customer can submit an order for goods or services, track the status of their order, and provide feedback. In turn, the organization can manage its inventory and adjust processes to ensure customer satisfaction. Our goal is to provide NSA customers visibility into our products and services with the ability to:

- browse, much like our current Intelink capability
- see the status of their requests and currently available products
- submit requests and/or subscribe to products and services
- update their profiles and
- request help

Internally, NSA analysts and managers will have a standard workflow to view and track the actions and data flows in response to requests from the customer order entry through the SIGINT production cycle using a common structure. The new process will facilitate automating distributions, TAGs, and INs, relieving analysts from manually inputting these items. The end-to-end tracking will provide improved collection and analysis of metrics to help steer production and manage critical resources.

(U//FOUO) Watch for part 2 of this article to find out what the CINR IPT is doing to achieve these goals.

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DERIVED FROM: NSA/CSSM 1-52, DATED 08 JAN 2007 DECLASSIFY ON: 20320108